

Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE)
Connecticut's Race to the Top (RTTT) Phase II Reform Plan
Details for Required Initiatives within the Local Education Agency (LEA)
Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

Goal 1: Standards and Assessments

1. Support the transition to and implementation of national common standards and high-quality assessments.
 - Adopt the new Connecticut standards for mathematics and language arts, based on the Common Core State Standards (CCSS).
 - Local boards of education adopt the new Connecticut standards based on the CCSS.
 - Incorporate the new Connecticut Standards for mathematics and language arts into district curricula.
2. Participate in state-sponsored professional development activities designed to assist districts in aligning local standards to the CCSS and implementing high-quality systems of curriculum, instruction and assessment.

CSDE, working with partners such as the Regional Educational Service Centers (RESC) Alliance, will provide professional development programs to support the varied districts needs. Professional development topics will include, but are not limited to:

 - Scientific Research-Based Intervention (SRBI);
 - Connecticut Benchmark Assessment System (CBAS) and formative assessments;
 - Growth models based on the Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) vertical scales; and
 - The *Connecticut Education Research and Data* (CEDaR) Web site – a resource for teachers and parents.
3. Collaborate with the CSBE to design and provide input on initiatives concerning high school, college, and workforce transitions.
 - Provide input to the *High School, College, Workforce Committee* on initiatives that would support improved transitions for students moving from high school into the workforce.
 - Assist the *High School, College, Workforce Committee* in the design of dual enrollment and developmental programs for students in grades 10-14, to ensure successful transitions between high school, community college and the workforce.
4. **Optional:** Participate in the pilot of *Board Examination Systems*.
 - Volunteering districts will participate in CSDE organizational activities to implement Board Examination systems.

Goal 2: Data Systems to Support Instruction

1. Participate in the expansion of the state longitudinal data system (SLDS) to include student schedule and staff modules to capture transcript data and link students to teachers.
 - As a pilot, link mathematics and reading teachers to the students they teach in the local student information system.

- After CSDE develops the student schedule and staff modules, districts incorporate the modules into their local student information system.
2. Provide data to support the state and federal research and program evaluation of the RTTT initiatives and the on-going development of the CEDaR as it is integrated into the PK – 16 SLDS.
 - Participate in the research and evaluation activities for the Connecticut RTTT initiatives.
 - Upload local data, through CEDaR, to increase the utility of the PK – 16 SLDS.
 3. Integrate the CMT vertical scale results into the local accountability system to measure student growth.
 - Attend professional development training sessions to learn to use the CMT vertical scales and other appropriate measures to capture student growth.
 4. Participate in professional development to more effectively use data to improve instruction.
 - Attend training sessions, which will be partnered with the Connecticut Benchmark Assessment System (CBAS), the Connecticut Accountability for Learning Initiative (CALI) and science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) training, to effectively use CSDE analytic tools and other data tools.
 5. Make available appropriate data for research and program evaluation
 - Ensure that any data from local instructional improvement systems are made available upon request.

Goal 3: Great Teachers and Leaders

21st Century Teaching, Learning and Assessment

1. Implement the following aspects of the Connecticut Eight-Year Plan for Secondary School Reform (CT Plan):
 - Utilize new model curricula (or align district curricula to model curricula) in English grades 6-10, Algebra I and II, Geometry, Statistics and Probability, Biological Sciences and/or BIO21, American History;
 - Pilot End-of-Course assessments for model curricula developed;
 - Build and implement student/family support systems for grades 6-12;
 - Adopt graduation requirements on or before June 2014, as outlined in the CT Plan for the graduating class of 2018;
 - Phase-in implementation of Student Success Plan system; and
 - Develop plan to provide new/additional mathematics and science courses (staffing, online courses, other) as needed to meet CT Plan graduation requirements.
2. Expand Advanced Placement course offerings.
 - Participate in initiatives to increase student participation and success in Advanced Placement courses.
3. Participate in projects promoting innovative teaching and learning of STEM.
 - Options for participation in a variety of professional development and student-centered initiatives designed to increase student interest, engagement, and achievement in STEM subjects.
4. Participate in projects and professional development programs to enhance parental and community involvement in promoting strong school cultures, improve instruction and engage in activities around student learning.

- Attend training sessions related to parent engagement, such as the School-Family-Community Partnership trainings, to develop the knowledge and skills necessary to collaborate with all parents to support student success.
 - Implement strategies, such as the School Action Plans, for family engagement that align with school improvement plans.
5. Participate in professional development programs that foster equity, diversity, and respect for individual differences as integral components of effective classroom instruction and school culture.
- Attend training sessions related to diversity, equity and respect for individual differences, such as *Courageous Conversations on Race*.
 - Utilize data related to race, ethnicity, gender, special needs and other diversities to develop appropriate strategies that inform and improve instruction and overall school climate.

Supervision and Evaluation

6. Implement a new, comprehensive system for supporting, supervising and evaluating teachers and principals, to be developed by CSDE in collaboration with external partners and LEAs, based on:
- *The Common Core of Teaching*;
 - *Connecticut's Guidelines for Teacher Evaluation and Professional Development*;
 - *The Common Core of Leading*;
 - Multiple indicators of student academic growth;
 - Current best practices in Connecticut;
 - Statewide report indicators required by RTTT; and
 - The Teacher Education and Mentoring program (T.E.A.M.).
7. Utilize the new evaluation system developed to conduct annual evaluations that will inform professional development and decisions around compensation, promotion, retention, tenure and removal.

Equitable Distribution of Effective Teachers and Principals

8. Collaborate with CSDE to ensure equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals via competitive grants and state-sponsored incentive programs. Grants will assist districts in recruiting, hiring, and retaining highly effective teachers and principals in shortage areas and disadvantaged communities (*LEAs must apply for these incentive funds from CSDE*).

The Connecticut Accountability for Learning Initiative (CALI)

9. Implement over a period of four years, the core CALI modules, Data Driven Decision Making, Making Standards Work, Effective Teaching Strategies, Common Formative Assessments and School Climate to Support Student Achievement.
10. Develop a measurable district improvement plan and school improvement plans with limited focus and annual targets for improvement student achievement.
11. Implement a three-tiered system of accountability through district, school and instructional data teams.

Goal 4: Turning Around the Lowest Achieving Schools

For the eligible schools in the following Districts: Bridgeport, Hartford, New Britain, New Haven, Windham and Stamford Academy:

1. Implement all requirements of the Title I g Section 1003 School Improvement Grant (SIG). For each approved school implement all the federal requirements for one of four reform models: Turn-around, Transformational, Restart and Closure.
2. Principals of SIG schools will participate in a Professional Learning Community with the State Department of Education.

